## City of Cambridge Police Review and Advisory Board

51 Inman Street Cambridge MA 02130 617-349-4396

## Minutes 2/24/2010

**Board Members Present:** Mertin Betts (chair), Martin Small, Susan Melucci, and Richard Peters **Staff Present**: Executive Secretary Marlissa Briggett and Investigative Outreach Liaison Joseph Johnson

Cambridge Police: Deputy Superintendent Christine Elow, Jennifer Flagg

Public Present: Albert Skane, Christina Fizzy, Marc Levy, Bishop Teixeira, King Downing

- Meeting began at 6:05pm with an extended time (30 minutes) for public comments along with
  questions about the rescheduling of the special meeting which had been cancelled because of
  the weather. The public spoke on various issues regarding the rules and procedures and the
  process for filing a complaint. Ms. Briggett and board members explained to the public that the
  Board utilizes the meetings to conduct business which is why the public comment period is
  limited.
- After public comment, the Board reviewed and approved the draft minutes from January 27, 2010 and then gave copies to the public.
- The Executive Secretary gave a report which included a reference to update the website with dates of the upcoming meetings and general information about PRAB. Ms. Briggett indicated that, in an effort to facilitate the ease of making a complaint, PRAB will install a brochure holder outside its office door for people to come in and pick up copies of the brochure (which includes the complaint form) outside of office hours. She also informed the board that Commissioner Haas has agreed to have a link on the Cambridge Police Department website to PRAB's website (on which copies of our complaint form can be downloaded). She noted that Deputy Elow is developing a new internal complaint form which will also reference PRAB. Ms. Briggett informed the public that the Board will be scheduling interviews for the vacant Board position.
- Deputy Superintendent Elow reported about her role as the head of the Professional Standards Unit of the Cambridge Police Department. She explained that she heads the investigation of civilian complaints against the department and serves as liaison to PRAB. She provided details about the department's efforts to measure and assess the quality of services to the public. Deputy Elow explained that the department randomly sent Incident Assessment Forms and will begin targeting some of the public instead to see if there are variations in the reports. She said they get a 20 25 % return. The 2009 quarterly forms returned were overwhelmingly positive. She noted, however, that the completed forms generally came from an older white population and she was trying to get a more representative sampling.

- Jennifer Flagg introduced herself as the coordinator of the Review Panel and talked about her
  role and the public meetings that were held at the library. She informed everyone that the
  committee will issue a progress report to the City Manager and Police Commissioner and that
  the subcommittee will meet in March. She indicated that the Board members were invited to
  the next Review Panel meeting and that, as soon as a date was set, she would forward the
  information along.
- Joe Johnson reported on the forum held on February 11, 2010 regarding police discretion and civil rights. The panel discussion included the former Police Commissioner and various other speakers. They all spoke about their professional experience and their encounter with the police. Most of the panel shared a common theme that there needs to be more dialogue between the police and the community. Many expressed the need to create more transparency and accountability measures to prevent a situation like the Gates' arrest from happening again.
- There was no new business to discuss so the Board when into executive session regarding cases before the Board. The meeting adjourned at 8:35.